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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7707
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 000242

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DEPARTMENT PASS TO AID/OTI (RPORTER)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/05/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [VE](#)
SUBJECT: FM MADURO CONTINUES ATTACKS ON NEGROPONTE

REF: A. CARACAS 00090
[1](#)B. CARACAS 00215

Classified By: ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR DANIEL LAWTON
FOR REASON 1.4 (D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) For the third time in two weeks, Minister of Foreign Affairs (FM) Nicolas Maduro attacked Deputy Secretary-designate John Negroponte, calling him a "confessed

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and convicted drug dealer". Maduro launched the latest round of insults February 4 at a Caracas military parade marking the fifteenth anniversary of Chavez' failed 1992 coup attempt. Referring to President Bush, Negroponte, and Luis Posada Carriles, a jailed anti-Castro militant, Maduro said "The Venezuelan people are dealing with delinquents, criminals, and mafiosos." Maduro accused the United States and Negroponte in particular of "buying arms in order to kill the people of Central America" in the 1980s. He also referred to Posada Carriles "as a terrorist protected by the United States."

[1](#)2. (SBU) Maduro's latest and anti-USG remarks come on the heels of his February 3 accusation that the USG is spearheading an international media campaign to "distort the Venezuelan reality" by claiming there exists a dictatorship in Venezuela. Maduro commented that "this campaign, like so many others, will be defeated."

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: A week after President Bush and Negroponte expressed concern over the state of democracy in Venezuela, BRV officials remain on the offensive and continue to use every media opportunity to hurl personal insults at USG officials. As always in the Bolivarian Republic, outrageous attacks on U.S. officials are a convenient substitute for discussing the real problems of Venezuela. END COMMENT.

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